



Honoring Those Who Labor to Save Lives

By: Mike Cunegin; Executive Director, Indiana Criminal Justice Institute

With Labor Day just around the corner, most of us will indulge in a variety of fun-filled activities in an effort to cling on to the last days of summer. In addition to county parades, backyard barbeques and bonfires on the beach, many Hoosiers will inevitably mark this festive occasion with alcohol. Yet those who chose to drink alcohol have an obligation to do so responsibly. This personal and peer accountability should also extend to safe driving choices. Safe driving is especially critical during the time of year when countless young Hoosiers are traveling Indiana's roadways to return to school.

According to the Center for Urban Policy and the Environment, in 2006, more than 273 Hoosiers died in Indiana highway crashes involving a driver with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .01 or higher. What is most disturbing is that these untimely fatalities are preventable. That is why I am grateful that more than 200 law enforcement agencies will be working together in collaborative force this Labor Day to crack down on those who violate Indiana's impaired driving laws.

The statewide "*Drunk Driving. Over the Limit. Under Arrest*" enforcement crackdown will go into effect on August 17, 2007 and will conclude on September 9, 2007. The goal of the Labor Day crackdown is to proactively decrease the number of traffic crashes and fatalities that may otherwise occur during this time.

Therefore, I strongly urge all law enforcement agencies that are not conducting these enforcement crackdowns to join forces with over 200 agencies that have already committed to this life-saving endeavor. I am confident that 2007 can reflect more promising and favorable outcomes if we all support this statewide effort to stop impaired driving.

It is evident that saving lives requires high levels of continued participation. I would be remiss not to commend the multitude of traffic safety advocates who work to ensure that sound policy, reliable programming and strong enforcement is in place to carry out the mission of the Governor's Council on Impaired & Dangerous Driving. I extend my deepest appreciation to every public servant who goes above and beyond the call of duty to improve safety on Indiana's roadways. I am humbled by your passion for traffic safety and by your commitment to saving lives.

Best Regards,

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